

SENATE BILL No. 38

DIGEST OF INTRODUCED BILL

Citations Affected: IC 20-33-2-19.

Synopsis: Released time religious instruction. Provides that a public secondary school student may receive not more than two elective academic credits for released time religious instruction classes if the governing body of the school corporation adopts a policy that allows the awarding of credit, and certain conditions are met.

Effective: July 1, 2016.

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January 5, 2016, read first time and referred to Committee on Education & Career Development.



Second Regular Session 119th General Assembly (2016)

PRINTING CODE. Amendments: Whenever an existing statute (or a section of the Indiana Constitution) is being amended, the text of the existing provision will appear in this style type, additions will appear in **this style type**, and deletions will appear in ~~this style type~~.

Additions: Whenever a new statutory provision is being enacted (or a new constitutional provision adopted), the text of the new provision will appear in **this style type**. Also, the word **NEW** will appear in that style type in the introductory clause of each SECTION that adds a new provision to the Indiana Code or the Indiana Constitution.

Conflict reconciliation: Text in a statute in *this style type* or ~~this style type~~ reconciles conflicts between statutes enacted by the 2015 Regular Session of the General Assembly.

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A BILL FOR AN ACT to amend the Indiana Code concerning education.

Be it enacted by the General Assembly of the State of Indiana:

- 1 SECTION 1. IC 20-33-2-19, AS ADDED BY P.L.1-2005,
2 SECTION 17, IS AMENDED TO READ AS FOLLOWS [EFFECTIVE
3 JULY 1, 2016]: Sec. 19. (a) When the parent of a student who is
4 enrolled in a public school makes a written request, the principal may
5 allow the student to attend a school for religious instruction that is
6 conducted by a church, an association of churches, or an association
7 that is organized for religious instruction and incorporated under
8 Indiana law.
9 (b) If a principal grants permission under subsection (a), the
10 principal shall specify a period or periods, not to exceed one hundred
11 twenty (120) minutes in total in any week, for the student to receive
12 religious instruction. The permission is valid only for the year in which
13 it is granted. Decisions made by a principal under this section may be
14 reviewed by the superintendent.
15 (c) A school for religious instruction that receives students under
16 this section:
17 (1) shall maintain attendance records and allow inspection of



these records by attendance officers; and

(2) may not be supported, in whole or in part, by public funds.

(d) A student who attends a school for religious instruction under this section shall receive the same attendance credit that the student would receive for attendance in the public schools for the same length of time.

(e) A public secondary school may award academic credit to a student who attends religious instruction under this section if the governing body of the school corporation adopts a policy that allows the awarding of credit. A policy adopted under this subsection must provide the following:

(1) Classes in religious instruction are evaluated on the basis of purely secular criteria in substantially the same manner as similar classes taken by a student at a nonpublic secondary school who transfers to a public secondary school are evaluated to determine whether the student receives transfer credit for the classes. Secular criteria may include the following in addition to other secular criteria established by the governing body:

(A) The number of hours of classroom instructional time.

(B) A review of the course syllabus that reflects the course requirements and materials.

(C) Methods of assessment used in the course.

(D) Whether the course is taught by a licensed teacher.

(2) The decision of whether to award academic credit is neutral as to, and does not involve any test for, religious content or denominational affiliation.

A student may be awarded a total of not more than two (2) elective academic credits under this subsection.

